

THE FUNCTION AND EVOLUTION OF BYZANTINE RHETORIC

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In his *Prolegomena to Rhetoric* a fifth-century anonymous author remarks that the function of rhetoric varies with the type of polity. Among the ancient Lacedaemonians rhetoric served the aims of oligarchy; among the Athenians, democracy; “we practice it in faith and orthodoxy under an empire.”¹ The statement expresses in concise terms the new role that rhetoric had come to play in Byzantine life. Not only had the system of government changed; it had assumed a religious habit. The devices of rhetoric must be adapted to serve not merely an empire but the Christian Empire of the East, with its political roots in its Roman past and its cultural heritage the educational ideals and techniques of late Antiquity. My purpose is to review the bases of the Byzantine rhetorical tradition as it arose in the early Christian centuries, to indicate the interplay between it and the forms of Byzantine literature, and to trace the changes that were rung on this pagan legacy in response to the evolving patterns and challenges of Byzantine civilization.

Byzantine rhetoric is throughout its history the heir of the Second Sophistic, that movement in thought and letters which extends from the time of Augustus to the end of the ancient world. Within the movement there are wide variations, and in its later history it exists side by side with the literature of Christianity which drew on it. If the Christian Chrysostom is the student of the pagan Libanius, sophist from Antioch, it is equally notable that the school of Gaza in the sixth century is peopled by Christian sophists. The Second Sophistic has in fact no clear terminus. One should rather say that it shades off into the Byzantine world of letters. In rhetoric as in other fields there can have been little awareness of the break, so useful to modern analysis, between late antique and Byzantine. Precisely because the tradition remained alive there never developed in Byzantium a uniquely Christian

¹ *Prolegomenon Sylloge*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig 1925) 41.7-9: Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ καὶ ἡ τῶν ἑητόρων δεκάς ἐπολιτεύσατο μὲν ὡς ἐν δημοκρατίᾳ. Λακεδαιμόνιοι δέ, ὡς ἐν ἀριστοκρατίᾳ· ἡμεῖς δὲ νῦν εὐτυχῶς ἐν βασιλείᾳ πιστῶς καὶ ὀρθοδόξως. Cf. also 38.8: ἡμεῖς σὺν θεῷ μετερχόμεθα τὴν τῆς ῥητορικῆς (i.e. type of rhetoric). I wish to thank my colleague Professor Westerink for many helpful suggestions in the writing of this paper.

rhetoric existing as an entity apart and distinct from its Sophistic forbears. The changes within this received framework are slow and sometimes subtle, but, for all that, there is, as we shall see, a clear pattern of development.

Starting from the latter part of the second century the literary practices and ideals of the Second Sophistic begin to be codified into the systems or textbooks that are henceforth to form the subject of instruction and the basis of literary performance and analysis for the succeeding centuries. These are the treatises that make up the Byzantine rhetorical tradition; they are copied many times over down to the late Middle Ages, commented upon, excerpted from, and on occasion altered in response to Christian demand. I mention two authors in particular: first, Hermogenes, the second- and third-century rhetorician from Tarsus, and second, the fourth- and fifth-century figure, Aphthonius of Antioch.² Byzantium knew and used other handbooks. One can trace the influence of Theon, Hermagoras, and Menander, and record the use of rhetorical masters such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Demetrius, Synesius, and Aristides, particularly after the tenth century; but they come much less to the fore than the ever present and ever used outlines of Hermogenes and his commentator, Aphthonius.³

The corpus of Hermogenic writings offers little that is original in the creative sense of the word. Hermogenes' works, however, have the virtue of clear exposition and arrangement of the subject matter, from which a large element of their appeal must derive. At the same time the five treatises in the corpus⁴ were the only attempt to cover the whole of rhetoric. The Second Sophistic had seen a trend away from the practical application of rhetoric for the law courts and political ceremonies of the empire. Rhetoric was now cultivated more and more as an academic subject, meant to supply the curriculum of higher education. Hermogenes' work suited the purpose admirably. The text is well written and its content, by no means easy—it was meant after all for the higher schools—has the virtue of a studied simplicity, a quality that

² Much of the Walzian corpus is a selection from some of these commentaries on these two authors. The wealth of the manuscript tradition may be inferred from the massive lists in the introduction to the Teubner text: *Hermogenis Opera, Rhetores graeci* 6, and *Aphthonii Progymnasmata, Rhetores graeci* 10, both ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig 1913, 1926). Rabe's two introductions should be supplemented by the valuable accounts of Radermacher and Brzoska in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*.

³ In focusing on Hermogenes and Aphthonius I do not wish to underestimate other contributions. The study of Byzantine rhetoric is in its infancy, and in this paper I do not propose more than a sketch of its main outlines. Future research must work in part towards tracing the fortunes of other figures through specialized studies on their rhetorical methods and vocabulary.

⁴ *Προγυμνάσματα, Περί στάσεων, Περί εὐρέσεως, Περί ιδεῶν, Περί μεθόδου δεινότητος*. Rabe considers the *Προγυμνάσματα* and the *Περί εὐρέσεως* spurious.

was to strike a very sympathetic Byzantine nerve and one that the author actually holds out as an ideal of style in his writings.⁵

Hermogenes had the good fortune to be received not long after his death into the bosom of the Neoplatonists. The earliest commentary of which we hear is by the third-century philosopher, Metrophanes of Phrygia, and no less a person than Iamblichus further enhanced Hermogenes' reputation by declaring in his favor over the claims of rival systems.⁶ Our earliest extant commentary is by Syrianus, the fifth-century Athenian scholar.⁷

Before we trace the later fortunes of Hermogenes, let us consider his partner, Aphthonius. The work by which Byzantium knew him was the *Progymnasmata*. The word refers to those school exercises, *praeexercitamenta* in Latin, which had since Hellenistic times formed part of the instruction in the ancient tongues. A progymnasma is essentially a set composition, in which one could presumably exercise the techniques of style laid down in such textbooks as those of Hermogenes.⁸ There is an inner logic in the fact that Aphthonius, through whom the Christian world was to learn so much of its rhetoric, was, like Chrysostom, a student of the pagan Libanius. Libanius also wrote progymnasmata. The special success of Aphthonius lies in the simplicity of his exposition as well as in his inclusion of examples for each of the types under discussion. His examples are hardly his own creation. As in the case of most rhetorical works, we can hardly ever hope to trace such formulas back to their origins, and we can only console ourselves that it would be little gain to the history of ideas to know the name of the school-master who first thought of asking his pupils to write a composition reproducing Ajax's thoughts before his suicide or Danaë's reaction to Zeus's golden shower.⁹

The standard number of progymnasmata is fourteen. They are divided by the scholiasts on Aphthonius into three categories, symbouleutic, dicanic, and panegyric, the tripartite arrangement that is at least as old as Aristotle.¹⁰ Under the first are ranged 1) *μῦθος*, myth; 2) *χρεία*, ethical thought;

⁵ Note the heavy emphasis in the *Περὶ ἰδεῶν* on such concepts as *καθαρότης*, *εὐκρίνεια*, *σαφήνεια*, *ἐπιείκεια*, *ἀφέλεια*, *ἀλήθεια*, and how to achieve each.

⁶ For the relation of these and other figures of the time to Hermogenes see Christ-Schmid-Stählin, *Geschichte der griechischen Litteratur* 7.2.2, ed. 6 (Munich 1924) 934-936.

⁷ *Syriani in Hermogenem commentaria*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig 1892-1893) 2 vols.

⁸ *Τὰ δὲ τοῦ Ἀφθονίου προγυμνάσματα εἰσαγωγή τις ὄντα πρὸς ἐκεῖνα* (i.e., *τὰ τοῦ Ἑρμογένους βιβλία*): *Rhetores graeci* 2.566.23.

⁹ Ajax: *Libanii opera*, ed. R. Foerster (Leipzig 1925), 8.384ff.; Danaë: Nicephorus Basilaces, *Rhetores graeci* 1.476.

¹⁰ *Rhetores graeci* 2.567.7. See also Matthew Camariotes, *Epitome, Rhetores graeci* 1.120.10; Anonymous on Aphthonius, *Rhetores graeci* 1.127.16. For other, albeit basically similar ways of dividing the progymnasmata, see the chart provided by Stegemann, s.v. "Theon" in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*, cols. 2043, 2044.

and 3) *γνώμη*, a maxim or saying.¹¹ Four others are *dicanic*: 1) *ἀνασκευή*, the refutation of a given statement; 2) *κατασκευή*, its opposite, or confirmation; 3) *εἰσφορὰ νόμον*, a discussion whether a given law is good or bad; and 4) *κοινὸς τόπος*, *communis locus*, by which is meant the amplification of a given topic. These judicial types were among the first to be affected by the decline of political oratory under the Roman Empire. At the same time that they were, on one level, retained as school exercises, they took a new lease on life by lending their resources to new purposes. *Ἀνασκευή* and *κατασκευή* were early turned into weapons of historical criticism. The Christian apologists used the techniques to counter the myths of the pagans, and Byzantine theological literature followed suit.¹² Cicero tells us that the *communis locus* plays on two emotions in particular: *indignatio* and *miseri-cordia*.¹³ Like the *εἰσφορὰ νόμον*,¹⁴ it had comparatively little independent existence in Byzantium, but, insofar as the appeal of many a homily and epistle rests on the evocation of just these two states of mind, it had a long and vibrant echo through the whole of the Middle Ages.

The panegyric types are four: 1) *ἐγκώμιον*, encomium; 2) its opposite, *ψόγος*, which censure, helped supply the long vocabulary of Byzantine invective before which one can only stand back in amazement; 3) *σύγκρισις*, comparison; and 4) *ἡθοποιΐα*, characterization. *Ἐκφρασις*, description (of people, places, and things), and *διήγημα*, narrative, are common to all three types, while *θέσις*, the posing of a question of general interest, partakes of both the symbouleutic and the panegyric. Although all the progymnasmata were current throughout Byzantine history, Byzantium paid more attention to the symbouleutic and the panegyric than to the *dicanic*. The clear correlation between these preferences and the main categories of Byzantine literature is striking proof of their vitality.

Letter writing had not been particularly developed as a genre in ancient Greece. Its heyday belongs rather to the Roman age and goes hand in hand with the emphasis on individual portraiture and character expression that

¹¹ Aphthonius's definitions, which are not original with him, are as follows: *χρεία ἐστὶν ἀπομνημόνευμα σύντομον εὐστόχως ἐπὶ τι πρόσωπον ἀναφέρονσα*: 3.21; *γνώμη ἐστὶ λόγος ἐν ἀποφάνσει κεφαλαιώδης ἐπὶ τι προτρέπων ἢ ἀποτρέπων*: 7.2. See also Theon, the oldest of the writers on progymnasmata available to us (second century of our era), *Progymnasmata*, ed. L. Spengel, *Rhetores graeci* (Leipzig 1854) 2.96.19: *χρεία ἐστὶ σύντομος ἀπόφασις ἢ πράξις μετ' εὐστοχίας ἀναφερομένη εἰς τι ὠρισμένον πρόσωπον ἢ ἀναλογεῖν προσώπων· παράκειται δὲ αὐτῇ γνώμη καὶ ἀπομνημονεύματα· πᾶσα γὰρ γνώμη σύντομος εἰς πρόσωπον ἀναφερομένη χρεῖαν ποιεῖ*.

¹² H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* (Munich 1960) sect. 1125.

¹³ *De inn.* 2.16.51.

¹⁴ This particular progymnasma, as a matter of fact, was from the beginning not quite on a par with the rest. See Hermogenes 26.11: *καὶ τὴν τοῦ νόμου εἰσφορὰν τάττονσί τινες ἐν γυμνάσμασι*. Similarly Aphthonius 46.20. One of the commentators, *Rhetores graeci* 1.597-648, omits it altogether.

is so marked a feature of Roman portrait art. During the Second Sophistic epistolography invaded Greek literature more and more: we need only think of such large collections as the letters of Alciphron and of Libanius. In the process, rhetoricians undertook to distinguish its various forms and to define the rules of composition. By the fifth century the pseudo- Libanius tradition recognized 41 distinct types of letter,¹⁵ but even this number was to prove inadequate to express the variegated refinements of the Byzantine mind. A late tradition lists 113 different possibilities.¹⁶ There is hardly a Byzantine author without his collection of letters. Epistolography is one of the most widely used and most successful of medieval literary forms. From the point of view of rhetorical theory, it falls under the heading of *ῥητοποιία*,¹⁷ the progymnasma par excellence which gave the freest scope to the expression of personality traits.

This particular legacy of the Second Sophistic, however, did not reach Byzantium only through pagan channels. Christianity had introduced itself to the world in the form of a letter.¹⁸ The importance of Saint Paul's Epistles, as witness the extensive and frequent byzantine commentaries, cannot be exaggerated. The religion of Jesus had accentuated the sense of the individual person or circumstance by emphasizing the private and unique relationship of the human soul to its Creator. In addition, the development of Christian theology had demanded of the Fathers a clear and close exposition of views by way of refining orthodox belief and combating heretical opinion. It is not without reason that Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Basil, and Chrysostom are incorporated into a Christian canon of epistolography and frequently cited by the rhetoricians of the later centuries together with their pagan predecessors. The Cappadocians gave to epistolography its eminently practical Christian character,¹⁹ and the lesson was not lost among that long parade of emperors and priests who chose to express themselves on a limitless range of subjects through the medium of their letters.

What is more, this emphasis on the personal was not restricted to letter writing. Many other literary forms, such as general histories, theological treatises, or even scientific tracts, come to be not merely dedicated, as in Antiquity, but now addressed to some particular person. The influence that *ῥητοποιία* exercised upon other forms of literature and the high esteem in which it was held in Byzantine circles are nowhere better illustrated than in an anonymous scholium on Aphthonius that *ῥητοποιία* is the perfect kind of progymnasma and in this capacity contributes to the *ἐπιστολιμαῖος χα-*

¹⁵ *Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι χαρακτῆρες*, ed. V. Weichert (Leipzig 1910) 14.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 34.

¹⁷ See Nicolaus, *Progymnasmata*, ed. J. Felten (Leipzig 1913) 67.2.

¹⁸ J. Sykutris, Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie* supp. 5 s.v. "Epistolographie" col. 219.24.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 219.39.

ρακτῆρ.²⁰ Not only the epistle but the homily as well had a large stake in it. Originally, under the Second Sophistic, the person of the orator displaying his virtuosity had become more prominent as against the virtuosity of the production. The Christian homilist through his address to his congregation now achieved the same effect as the pagan sophist.

At the same time, ῥητοποιΐα is practiced extensively as a form of literature in its own right. Here we can distinguish two types of compositions: those that followed the old pagan models and those that adopted Christian themes. The origin of the Christian topics is as obscure as that of their pagan equivalents. It is clear, however, that the techniques of Christian education were elaborated in the fourth century and developed and multiplied throughout the fifth and sixth centuries. That the school of Gaza played an important role is more than likely.²¹ The writings of the Gazaeans continued very popular in Byzantium, and in their texts one will find quotations from Homer side by side with passages from Isaiah. The pious Christian could now release his imagination to ponder not Ajax, but what Samson said upon being blinded, what the Virgin might have remarked upon seeing her son change the water into wine, or—a mixture of pagan and Christian—Hades's remarks on learning of Lazarus's resurrection.²² The most that can be said for these pursuits is that they may have promoted the cause of Christian piety. Yet behind the ῥητοποιΐα, as well as behind the forms of literature it affected, lurks the informing presence of Aphthonius, rhetorician from Antioch.

Just as with the ῥητοποιΐα, so too in the encomium one can detect three different levels of transmission from Rome to Byzantium. The first keeps to the letter of the old tradition. Encomia continue to be formed on the basis of the pagan prescriptions. In the second, the outer structure is again retained, but the author heaps his praise on Christian models. The third is the most fruitful, for it uses the resources of the encomium to guide and adorn other forms of literature. One thinks of the panegyrics composed by the Cappadocians and later Fathers in honor of Christian martyrs; the catalogues of praise that are a vital ingredient of the saints' lives; the appreciation, often in the form of a letter, of the virtues of the Fathers and, in the secular sphere, of

²⁰ *Rhetores graeci* 2.52.1.

²¹ Much work still needs to be done to clarify the text tradition and to assess the contribution of the Gazaeans. See the old but useful account by K. Seitz, *Die Schule von Gaza* (Heidelberg 1892), as well as Aly's recent discussion of Procopius in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*; also G. Downey, "The Christian Schools of Palestine," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 12 (1958) 297-319.

²² One of the more interesting treatments of such topics is by Nicephorus Basilaces in the middle of the twelfth century, *Rhetores graeci* 1.466ff., where such ῥητοποιΐαι are presented side by side with those of pagan themes, whether mythological (Zeus, Ajax) or historical (Xerxes 487).

learned or otherwise distinguished contemporaries; the admiration and reverence with which the Byzantine exegete approached the Gospel text; and, not least commonly, the praise of the Lord of Heaven and other persons of the Christian pantheon through homily or hymn. The attitudes and functions that define this religious literature were nourished early in the career of the schoolboy and later university student by rhetorical handbooks, of which the summary of Aphthonius was the most popular. I do not mean to suggest that the Byzantines owed the nobility of their religious vision or their cultural achievements to what is admittedly a thoroughly pedestrian compendium of rhetorical rules. Rather, the retention of such legacies came about because they had a certain natural affinity with Byzantium's own interests. We cannot hope to decide at any given point whether we are dealing with the Christianization of Hellenism²³ or the Hellenization of Christianity; so intimately entwined are the two strands and so inseparable a complement do they form to one another in the tapestry of medieval culture.

The third of the panegyrical forms is the *σύγκρισις*. It cuts across the other rhetorical types and affects them all. A simile is one of its simplest expressions. A Plutarchian parallel *Life* is another. *Σύγκρισις* is indispensable to the encomium (how better to stress the virtues of your subject than by comparing him to a lesser man), and it is common in the *ἐκφρασις* (how much better this mosaic is than that of Zeuxis; this icon puts Pheidias to shame).²⁴ The habit of the comparison is built into the system of progymnasmata itself: *ἀνασκευή* is followed by *κατασκευή*, encomium by *ψόγος*, and *θέσις* suggests *ἀντίθεσις*. Although the comparison appears in many of the genres of Byzantine literature, it is particularly effective in the homilies with their exhortations to the good life: the works of the devil are contrasted with the works of God, the grossness of heathenism with the beauty of the Christian revelation, the way of the sinner with the way of the pious. The technique of comparison is already biblical: witness the parable of the foolish virgins, and the same sense of contrast must have impressed itself on the early Fathers who saw themselves ranged on opposite sides of a dogmatic issue or against the power of Rome as they sought to develop a scheme of Christian doctrine. In one of his letters, Gregory of Nazianzus, instructing a friend in the principles of effective writing, encourages the use of mythology as a form of *σύγκρισις*.²⁵ Finally, the technique finds its most fruitful and

²³ Nothing better illustrates the impact of religion upon the progymnasmata than the fortunes of the *ψόγος*, the opposite of the encomium. In their original secular functions, the two would be on a par and each had a purely human reference that derived ultimately from the equal rights of plaintiff and defendant in the courtroom. In a religious society whose instruments are devoted to the celebration of the Deity, *ψόγος* often appears as part of the encomium, serving to attack heretics and nonbelievers.

²⁴ See M. Guignet, *St. Grégoire de Nazianze et la rhétorique* (Paris 1911) 189.

²⁵ Letter 46, PG 37.96A.

original development in literary criticism. The many comparisons to be found among the literary notices in Photius's *Bibliotheca* are guided by his sense of historical fitness. He will compare only works of literature which are legitimately matched and will use a critical vocabulary carefully chosen so as to be generally contemporary with the authors under review.²⁶

Although the *ἔκφρασις* could apply as well to people as to things, some of our best examples describe the realm of nature and, as a special category, works of art. In the general decline of poetry during the Second Sophistic and in some periods of Byzantine history, it supplied a kind of lyric in prose in which the word-painter could give rein to his talents. The *ἔκφρασις* has given us some of the most beautiful passages in Byzantine literature. The particular attraction that it had for the medieval mind is not difficult to see. As Guignet points out, the immobility and fixity of form of a work of art permitted the unhampered pursuit of detail and made possible, at least theoretically, the attainment of perfection in the genre.²⁷ At the same time that it served the cause of art, the *ἔκφρασις* in its larger sense aided the cause of religion. The descriptions of the heavenly majesty in the religious poetry of Byzantium, the inspired variety of address to the Deity, the deeply felt recital of the mercy and providence of God, must have been initially fostered in the Byzantine classroom. Further, the *ἔκφρασις* is one of the most Christianized of forms. Between the sixth and the eleventh centuries practically all the examples we have are devoted to Christian works. Then, with the revival of interest in pagan subjects, we begin to find *ἐκφράσεις* of classical art. Psellus's description of two representations of the Circe episode in Homer and Constantine Manasses's of an antique relief of Odysseus and Polyphemus are among the earliest.²⁸

Aphthonius defines the *μῦθος* as "a false saying which mirrors the truth,"²⁹ the same definition that appears in the lexica of Hesychius, Photius, and the Suda. The extensive use of the fable is a continuation from the period of the Second Sophistic, when the collections of fables in prose and verse that have come down to us were originally compiled. In Byzantium the *μῦθος* answered the ethical demands of the religious mind, and its popularity may be due in part to the momentary freedom that its fictional appeal gave from the confinements of dogma and the strictures of doctrinal prescription.

²⁶ This subject has been treated *in extenso* in my "The literary criticism of Photius, a Christian definition of style," *Ἑλληνικά* 17 (1962) 132-169.

²⁷ *St. Grégoire* 207.

²⁸ Psellus: *Tzetzae allegoriae Iliadis; accedunt Pselli allegoriae*, ed. J. Boissonade (Paris 1851) 363-365; *M. Pselli scripta minora 2: Epistulae*, ed. E. Kurtz (Milan 1941) letter 188, 207-209. For Manasses see C. Mango, "Antique statuary and the Byzantine beholder," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (Washington 1963) 65.

²⁹ 1.6: *ἔστι δὲ μῦθος λόγος ψευδὴς εἰκονίζων τὴν ἀλήθειαν.*

Χρεια and *γνώμη* also fall in the symbouleutic category,³⁰ the one a specific quotation from a given author, the other a general maxim. Some of the texts continue to be taken from the ancient tradition. Nicephorus Basilaces, a twelfth-century writer, professor of Gospel exegesis and author of a rhetorical manual, urges Sophocles as a model for the *χρεια*; and an anonymous scholiast cites a Demosthenic *γνώμη*.³¹ The *χρεια* has its Christian echoes in the exegetical commentaries of Byzantium, with their investigations of scriptural meaning, as well as in the quotations from the early Fathers and in the vast body of catenae literature.

The predilection for the important saying, the mot juste, the epigrammatic, has its other side as well. The lexicographers are an instance of the fragmentation of learning in pursuit of the subtle and unique. The extensive collections of the paroemiographers and the excerpts from classical and Christian works that begin in the ninth century and continue apace through the scholarly labors of Constantine Porphyrogenitus are affected by the same spirit. In judging all these efforts, however, we have to make a distinction between the interest in the unique and in the uniquely representative. When the Byzantines pursued the former, they often degenerated into mere purism; when they sought the latter, we see them at their best, as in the great periods of their art. Both possibilities derive from the same source and for both rhetoric had a significant role to play.

The highest achievement of the Christian prose literature is the homily. Many of the techniques of rhetoric contribute to its formation and lend their resources to its power and beauty. One of the best illustrations is the recently edited and translated corpus of nineteen Photian homilies.³² The selection of the canon, made probably by the author himself, is such as to give representation to the major categories we have been discussing: two of the homilies are in the form of an *ἐκφρασις*; two are encomia; one has extensive citations from the pagan myths in condemnation of those who prefer them to the Christian revelation; two are narratives of the history of the Arian controversy; and throughout them all we see a free use of scriptural quotation, folk proverb, as well as character description. The author knew Hermogenes intimately,³³ and his acquaintance with Aphthonius is evident from the notice in the *Bibliotheca* codex 133.³⁴ To be sure, the corpus of the homilies was not compiled with them in mind; but it is clear that one of the most splendid monu-

³⁰ See n. 11 above.

³¹ *Rhetores graeci* 1.445, 605.

³² *Φωτίου ὁμιλίας* ed. B. Laourdas (Thessalonike 1959), C. Mango, *The Homilies of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople English Translation, Introduction, and Commentary*; (Cambridge, Mass. 1958).

³³ Photius's use of Hermogenes is analyzed in detail in the work cited above, n. 26.

³⁴ Photius prefers, however, the style of the fourth-century rhetorician, Palladius of Methone.

ments of Byzantine literature owes much of its outer form to the rhetorical tradition.

The influence of rhetoric is not limited to the literary arts. The Greek language has, built into it, a surprisingly large number of ways of saying "if." The system of progymnasmata can be regarded as in some ways a codification of this speculative spirit. It compels a consideration of all possibilities in a given instance. The encomium, for example, calls for ever new variations on the theme of praise; *ἡθοποιῖα* concerns itself with what so-and-so would have said if—; the *χρεία* asks for the exercise of the imagination on the possible meanings in a given phrase; the *θέσις* ponders such questions as *εἰ πλευστέον*, *εἰ γαμητέον*, should one take a trip, should one marry; the *σύγκρισις*, by juxtaposing parallels, enlarges the range of experience of the possibilities of life. This rhetorical education, in addition to marking the educated man, was the key to entering the imperial bureaucracy. If politics is the art of the possible, one may be justified in seeing a correlation between the educational system and the vaunted successes of Byzantine diplomacy, which by adroitly balancing one adversary against another, kept at bay the host of enemies that through so many centuries ringed the Empire on every side.

Rhetoric for the Byzantine was not simply an educational force but a way of life. *παιδεία* means both education *and* culture. Neither the Hellenistic nor the Byzantine world knew the set of associations which we give to a college "commencement." Life is one, under the guidance of Divine Providence. Such a philosophy could yield brilliant successes, but it had also its pitfalls in irrelevance and retreat before new challenge. The fortunes of poetry are a case in point: on the one hand the sublimity of a religious ode; on the other, poetry as merely an aid to the work of prose. The failure of secular poetry comes about not because, as is sometimes said, Byzantium could not appreciate it, but because prose, not poetry, was the proper medium of education, and education was all in all.

The prescribed style in which the literature we have been examining was to be written continued to be Attic. The definition of the term, however, changes as we move down in time. The basic distinction is between *ἀττικῶς* (or *ῥητορικῶς*) and *κοινῶς*.³⁵ Starting about the middle of the tenth century, the scribes of the Byzantine renaissance begin to copy not only prose works but poetry as well. As a result the compass of Attic style expands so as to include the ancient tragic poets. Böhlig's recent study has shown that much of what earlier lexicists call poetic, Tzetzes by the twelfth century calls Attic.³⁶ This tendency pushed into the background the difference between prose and poetry and helped continue the hegemony of prose. The introduction

³⁵ G. Böhlig, *Untersuchungen zum rhetorischen Sprachgebrauch der Byzantiner* (Berlin 1956) 3ff.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 14.

of poetry into the definition of Attic meant that more and more the literary tradition was intended for the discriminating few. Since poetry and prose together become opposed to what is *κοινόν*, and since *κοινόν* means "ordinary" as well as "in general use," its opposite is therefore "extraordinary" or Attic.³⁷

Concurrent with the introduction of poetry Byzantium witnesses the steady enlargement of the canon of Attic prose. The scholars of the Renaissance turn their attention to manuscripts not only of the classical authors but of later Greek literature as well. The *Bibliotheca*, for example, reviews not only the old canon of the ten Athenian orators but records another list, created probably in the fourth century, which includes Dio, Herodes, Philostratus, and Aristides.³⁸ Into this continuum there is fitted by the ninth century a third canon of Christian authors. The models of Christian epistolography come to be Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Isidore.³⁹ Beginning with the ninth century, a kind of Christian classicism appears, engendered in part by the triumph of orthodoxy over iconoclasm, which comes to be thought of as the last heresy to plague the Faith. Hence the need to hold out what is orthodox becomes apparent not merely in dogma but in literature as well. By the twelfth century there is added to this curious mixture of classical and early Christian figures a Byzantine name. Joseph Rhacendytes's *Rhetorical Synopsis* lists as model epistolographers the three Cappadocians, Synesius, Libanius, and "the most learned Psellus."⁴⁰ Another writer gives as models of the panegyric form Basil, Aristides, Themistius, Procopius of Gaza, Choricus, and, he says, particularly Psellus. In epistolography, his exemplars are the three Cappadocians, Synesius, Libanius, and Psellus.⁴¹ Indeed, Psellus became the prime model for all types. Thus, if Homer and Demosthenes and Chrysostom and Psellus are Attic, the word has come by the twelfth century to refer to any author worthy of imitation, contemporary or ancient.⁴²

The way to achieve Attic style was to follow the precepts of Hermogenes. His *Περὶ ἰδεῶν* recognizes seven qualities of style: *σαφήνεια* (clarity); *ἀξίωμα λόγου* (loftiness); *κάλλος* (beauty); *γοργότης* (conciseness); *ἡθος*; *ἀλήθεια* (sincerity); and, the pinnacle of stylistic excellence, *δεινότης* (force).

³⁷ *Ibid.* 16. See also T. Hedberg, *Eustathios als Attizist* (Uppsala 1935), and P. Wirth, *Untersuchungen zum byzantinischen Rhetorik des zwölften Jahrhunderts* (Munich 1960).

³⁸ See A. Mayer, "Psellos' Rede über den rhetorischen Charakter des Gregorios von Nazianz," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 20 (1911) 82.

³⁹ See B. Laourdas, "Παρατηρήσεις ἐπὶ τοῦ χαρακτῆρος τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ Φωτίου," *Ἑπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 21 (1951) 74-109.

⁴⁰ *Rhetores graeci* 3.559.12.

⁴¹ *Rhetores graeci* 3.572.25ff.

⁴² Böhlig (n. 35 above) 16.

Not all of these are equally emphasized at every period, but inasmuch as their selection defines the over-all pattern of Byzantine literary culture, the fortunes of Hermogenes are a good guide for tracing the evolution of rhetoric.

We can distinguish four periods. After Syrianus our information about Hermogenes is scanty. The school of Gaza made little use of him. His influence, it would seem, was particularly felt in Athens and Alexandria; with the closing of the Athenian school in 529 and with the Arab conquest of Antioch and Alexandria his fortunes faded. Constantinople must have initially been least aware of him, and he does not figure in the works of such writers as Nicephorus and John of Damascus. The manuscript tradition, however, may perhaps be interpreted as bearing witness to an undercurrent of use in the schools. The present corpus of five treatises was first put together in the late fifth or early sixth century, and many progymnasmata written at the time became attached to his name.⁴³ That Photius relies heavily on Hermogenic concepts without ever citing the name of the rhetor suggests that Hermogenes continued to form a staple of the educational system. The systematic search for manuscripts following the Arab defeat in 868 and the expansionist policies of the Byzantine court no doubt helped bring him once again to the fore.

With the ninth century begins the second period of Byzantine rhetorical history. The direction it takes and the principles it espouses are the immediate result of the iconoclastic age. The struggle had ended with the triumph of image worship. The questions that had for centuries been pressing for solution had now to be resolved. One of the major contributions of the opponents of images had been to substitute for religious art a cycle of representations drawn from the ancient tradition. In so doing they gave strong reinforcement to the classical elements in Byzantine life. The pagan tradition had, however, through the use of such textbooks as Hermogenes, rigidified the lay sector of Byzantium, and in its realm Christianity had done the same. Nothing could be clearer than the prescription of the Trullan Synod of 692, which requires homilists to draw from the Fathers rather than compose their own sermons.⁴⁴ Thus iconoclasm challenged the Church on its home ground, and with the victory of the iconophiles the stage was set for defining the relationship between Christianity and classical culture. Photius offers a synthesis in which Christianity is the ruling element, effecting itself in concert with a carefully culled classicism.

⁴³ *Praefatio* to Rabe's edition of Aphthonius, xiv. See n. 2 above.

⁴⁴ *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. J. D. Mansi (Graz 1960) 11.952CD: οἱ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν προεστῶτες μᾶλλον ἐν τούτοις (i.e., the Fathers) εὐδοκίμη-
 τωσαν ἢ λόγους οἰκείους συνιάττοντες.

This interaction of classical and Christian can be detected as well in the educational reforms of the day. The patriarchal school had existed in Constantinople side by side with the university. It had not dealt exclusively with theology or the training of the clergy, but obviously did less than the university with the profane disciplines. In 861 Photius restored instruction in the profane sciences along with theology. Two years later Caesar Bardas reorganized the university and, as a result, both institutions now supported profane studies. Before his elevation, Photius had been a professor at the university; thus his support of secular learning was natural.⁴⁵

The style of writing practiced in both these schools no doubt followed the Photian principle of adaptation from a Hermogenic base. Selection is to be made of only those qualities of style which correspond to the ideal of Christian character. Photius calls for a gracious and noble simplicity—a Hermogenic concept—of both words and action and, in doing so, deliberately turns away from the cornerstone of Hermogenes' system, *δεινότης*, as well as from some of the means by which it is acquired, such as *τραχύτης* (ruggedness), *σφοδρότης* (intensity), and *δριμύτης* (pungency), all of which could suggest the very opposite of Christian modesty and humility. Like Hermogenes, he recommends a proper mixture of the ingredients of good style. This feeling for propriety (*τὸ οἰκεῖον*), which he shares with the Second Sophistic, is deepened in response to a profound historical sense in the judgment of life and letters; and, indeed, the mixture is of something far greater than stylistic effects. It is Christianity and classical culture itself.⁴⁶

The tradition of letter writing must have played an important role in the formulation of the Photian ideal, for some of the terms that he retains are similar to the requirements laid down by Gregory of Nazianzus for epistolography: *συντομία*, *σαφήνεια*, *χάρις*, *τὸ πρέπον* and *ἀττικισμός*.⁴⁷ Isidore of Pelusium in the fifth century continues the tradition,⁴⁸ as does Photius in the ninth, listing *βραχύτης*, *σαφήνεια*, *χάρις*, and *ἀπλότης* as the qualities by which to convey the ethos of the letter writer and his subject.⁴⁹ So too, a

⁴⁵ See F. Dvornik, "Photius et la réorganisation de l'académie patriarcale," *Analecta bollandiana* 68 (1950) 108-125 *passim*.

⁴⁶ This paragraph is a summary from the detailed analyses to be found in the work cited in n. 26 above as well as in my "History and theology in Photius," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 10 (1964) 37-74.

⁴⁷ Letter 51, PG 37.105.

⁴⁸ Bk. 5.133, PG 78.1404B: *ὁ ἐπιστολιμαῖος χαρακτήρ μήτε παντάπασιν ἀκόσμητος ἔστω μήτε μὴν εἰς θρόνῳ κεκοσμημένος ἢ τρυφήν. τὸ μὲν γὰρ εὐτελές, τὸ δὲ ἀπειρόκαλον · τὸ δὲ μετρίως κεκοσμηθῆναι καὶ πρὸς χρεῖαν καὶ πρὸς κάλλος ἀρκεῖ.*

⁴⁹ B. Laourdas, "Παρατηρήσεις ἐπὶ τοῦ χαρακτήρος τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ Φωτίου," *Ἑπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 21 (1951) 81.

late anonymous writer reminds us that ῥηθοποιῖα should be καθαρά, and without ruggedness.⁵⁰

The third period extends from the eleventh to the end of the twelfth century. The Macedonian renaissance had introduced Christian scholarship on a solid and equal footing with the classics. The succeeding centuries saw an expansion of both. If nothing else, the sheer weight of the multiplication of knowledge may be enough to account for the dissolution of the Photian synthesis. The period comes to be marked by a sharp polarity between the two traditions. The key figures of the age, Psellus, Tzetzes, Eustathius, have in common a curious ambivalence that makes it possible for our handbooks to divide their productions into two parts, those on pagan versus those on Christian themes.

Psellus's works well illustrate this division. He has left us two different treatments of the style of Gregory of Nazianzus. One cites him as part of the Christian canon that includes Chrysostom and the other two Cappadocians,⁵¹ just as the ninth century had done. Psellus is here at pains to show that Gregory's prose and poetry meet the ancient criteria, that Gregory can stand on an equal footing with the models of the Second Sophistic such as Aristides, and in short, that he is the Christian equivalent, preferable for the Christian because he writes about Christian things and writes about them well. This is a legitimate appreciation of Gregory as a literary figure and as a Church Father. In the other treatise⁵² Psellus sees Gregory as the acme of a long, unbroken tradition of Greek letters, superior to Sappho, Thucydides, and others with whom Gregory could have nothing in common. Here, rhetorically speaking, the σύγκρισις principle has gone awry. In an excess of pious zeal, Psellus has failed to fit his subject into the proper literary and historical context. Interestingly enough, the treatise that brings to bear the greater amount of classical knowledge is not the first, which, despite the sounder evaluation, is rather standard and restricted in its analysis, but the second. Here the learned Psellus draws on wide resources. In addition to Hermogenes, he makes critical use of the rhetorical vocabulary of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (whose work *De compositione verborum* he had partially excerpted),⁵³ of

⁵⁰ *Rhetores graeci* 3.595.11: οὐδὲ καθαρὰν τὴν φράσιν ἐτήρησαν φλεγμαίνοντες τὰ πολλὰ καὶ τραχυνόμενοι τῇ λέξει· καὶ τοῦτο δὲ δι' ἐπίδειξιν, ὅμως οὐκ ἐμέμφθησαν τοῖς πολλοῖς διὰ τὸ φιλότιμον τοῦ λόγου καὶ πόριμον, ἴσως δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς ζηλώσομεν τούτους κατὰ καιρόν.

⁵¹ Χαρακτῆρες Γρηγορίου τοῦ θεολόγου, τοῦ μεγάλου Βασιλείου, τοῦ Χρυσόστομου καὶ Γρηγορίου τοῦ Νύσσης, ed. J. Boissonade in M. Psellus, *De operatione daemonum; accedunt inedita opuscula* (Nuremberg 1838, repr. Amsterdam 1964) 124-131.

⁵² Text and commentary by A. Mayer, "Psellos' Rede über den rhetorischen charakter des Gregorios von Nazianz," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 20 (1911) 27-100.

⁵³ *Rhetores graeci* 5.598. Note also Hermogenes rendered into political verse, *Rhetores graeci* 3.687, and Psellus's summary of the *Περὶ Ἰδεῶν*, *Rhetores graeci* 5.601.

Demetrius, and Longinus; and he borrows phrases in abundance from Philostratus and Synesius. The work displays a heightened interest in pagan rhetoric as such, side by side with a strong religiosity; but the discussion fails because the one does not inform or relate to the other.

Psellus's two main interests in the pagan tradition are rhetoric and philosophy. He pursues two objects, "to improve his stylistic eloquence through rhetoric and to purify his spirit through philosophy."⁵⁴ In an encomium on his teacher, John Mauropus, he remarks that philosophy without rhetoric has no grace, and rhetoric without philosophy no content.⁵⁵ He berates one of his correspondents with the remark, "Perhaps you know philosophy and rhetoric, but you do not know how to put them together; there is a philosophizing rhetoric as well as a rhetoricizing philosophy."⁵⁶ In another letter, he points out, "Just as Plato in the *Timaeus* combines theology with physical science, so I write philosophy by means of rhetoric and fit myself to both through the use of both."⁵⁷ He recognizes another kind of philosophy superior to the pagan,⁵⁸ and there are a number of passages such as the above which call for a synthesis of rhetoric and philosophy,⁵⁹ but the appeal is self-conscious and almost obsessive. The terms in which it is couched take us back into the atmosphere of late Antiquity and remind us of the Neoplatonic concern to relate philosophy to rhetoric in a meaningful way. Psellus's role as head of the philosophical school organized by Constantine IX in 1045 gave him the opportunity of exploring in these areas without strict reference to the Christian tradition.

At the same time, there is a Christian Psellus. We are not yet in a position to date the mass of his works so as to establish a pattern of intellectual development, but it is clear that he was active in both traditions and that

⁵⁴ *The History of Psellus* 36, ed. C. Sathas (London 1899) 6.107.15: ῥητορικοῖς μὲν λόγοις τὴν γλῶτταν πλάσσειν πρὸς εὐπρέπειαν καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ καθάραι τὸν νοῦν.

⁵⁵ *Bibliotheca graeca medii aevi*, ed. C. Sathas (Paris 1876) 5.148: ὅτα νοῦ προεστῶτες γλῶτταν ἀδιανόητον ἔχουσιν—ὃ τε γὰρ μόνως φιλόσοφος ἄχαρις καὶ ὁ τὴν τέχνην διηρημένως κομπάζων τοῦ κοσμοῦντος ἐστέρηται σχήματος—κατώρθωσε συνάψας τὰ διαισθῆναι δοκοῦντα καὶ τὸν νοῦν καθιδύναι τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς ῥητορικῆς χάρισι τὴν τε γλῶτταν σεμνύναι τοῖς φιλοσόφοις νοήμασι.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 442: σὺ μὲν οὖν ἴσως φιλοσοφίαν ἐπίστασαι καὶ ῥητορικὴν, τὸ δ' ἐξ ἀμφοῖν σύνθετον ἀγνοεῖς· ἔστι δέ, ὦ λῶστε, καὶ φυλοσοφίας ῥητορικὴ καὶ ῥητορείᾳ φιλόσοφος. The passage forms part of a discussion of Hermogenes.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 476: καὶ ὥσπερ ὁ Πλάτων τῇ φυσιολογίᾳ μίγνυσσι Τιμαιογραφῶν κατὰ τὸν σιλογράφον οὕτω δὴ καὶ γὰρ τῇ ῥητορικῇ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν συντίθημι καὶ πρὸς ἀμφοτέρους δι' ἀμφοτέρων ἀρμόζομαι.

⁵⁸ *The History of Psellus* 42, ed. C. Sathas 6.109.26: ἐστὶ τις καὶ ὑπὲρ ταύτην ἑτέρα φιλοσοφία.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 41; *Bibliotheca graeca* 5.480; Encomium on Symeon Metaphrastes, PG 114.188A: ἔμφωνον ἴν' οὕτως εἶπω τὸν νοῦν καὶ ἔννοον τὴν γλῶτταν εἰργάσατο; Letter 241, ed. Kurtz (n. 28 above); *et al.*

rhetoric is a vital force in both. Hermogenes is still the key figure.⁶⁰ Psellus, like Tzetzes, renders the text into political verse. Of particular interest is his *Synopsis* of the rhetorician. One way of achieving *σεμνότης*, says Hermogenes, is to talk about the gods (*τῶν θεῶν*). Psellus keeps the outline but makes the phrase singular, *τοῦ θεοῦ*.⁶¹ The frame of the text is received without question, and only that portion changed which stands in glaring contrast to Christian concerns. Of roughly the same date must be a set of anonymous scholia on the *Περὶ ἰδεῶν*.⁶² Once again, the treatment of *δεινότης* follows Hermogenes' pattern. Besides the gods, Hermogenes suggests 1) a discussion of divine matters (*τὰ θεῖα πράγματα*), that is, cosmology (his examples are taken from Plato's *Timaeus*); 2) things with a divine connection that men care about, such as the immortality of the soul or the cardinal virtues; and 3) important but exclusively mortal things, like the battles of Plataea, Marathon, or Salamis.⁶³ The Paris manuscript adds to these same scholia a note to the effect that Christians have many citations not available to the ancient writers, such as the beginning of the Fourth Gospel, and that writers on the Hexaëmeron achieve *σεμνότης* by their reference to creation and the works of God.⁶⁴ Another curious manuscript from the twelfth or thirteenth century gives an ordinary analysis of Hermogenes' text, but the scribe into whose hands it fell erased the examples from Demosthenes and substituted where he could quotations from Gregory of Nazianzus.⁶⁵

The last period in the rhetorical history of Byzantium is the Palaeologan age. Here we have come full circle. The scholia of Maximus Planudes on Hermogenes do little more than elaborate the text.⁶⁶ Pletho's synopsis also follows the rhetorician, although one detects here a more original mind, going beyond the traditional scheme by citing other handbooks, calling attention to Hermogenes' sources, and occasionally being slightly critical of him.⁶⁷ The literary quarrel between Theodore Metochites and Nicephorus Chumnus in the fourteenth century has recently been the subject of a monograph by Ševcenko.⁶⁸ Metochites is attacked by Chumnus because his style is *ἀσαφής* (unclear), the opposite of the Hermogenic ideal, and also lacks *κάλλος* and *ἥθος*.

⁶⁰ See n. 53 above.

⁶¹ *Rhetores graeci* 5.602.2. *σεμνότης* is a subdivision of *ἀξίωμα λόγον* in Hermogenes' scheme. Tzetzes: *Rhetores graeci* 3.671ff.

⁶² *Rhetores graeci* 7.2.861ff.

⁶³ Hermogenes, 219ff.

⁶⁴ *Rhetores graeci* 7.2.954ff., esp. 956, 957.

⁶⁵ See V. de Falco, *Trattato retorico bizantino (Rhetorica marciiana)* (Pavia 1930).

⁶⁶ The passage on *σεμνότης* for example, restores the plural, *τῶν θεῶν*: *Rhetores graeci* 5.480-481.

⁶⁷ *Rhetores graeci* 6.546-598.

⁶⁸ I. Ševcenko, *Études sur la polémique entre Théodore Métochite et Nicéphore Choumnos* (Brussels 1962).

In his defense Metochites says that his aim is *δεινότης*, also recommended by Hermogenes, and notes that this recognized excellence is acquired in part by *τραχύτης* and *σφοδρότης*, the very qualities which the ninth century had tended to exclude. Thus Metochites cultivates *ἀσάφεια* deliberately and can cite in his defense Hermogenes' own condemnation of excessive clarity.⁶⁹

This peculiar state of affairs, which elevates obscurity into a literary virtue, explains the direction of much of Byzantine writing. No one who reads Byzantine literature at all need be told that, whereas the ideal constantly being held forth is clarity and simplicity, clear and simple is precisely what the literature is often not. The secular reasons for this can be seen in the set of associations that come to be attached to the word "Attic." One must, however, look also for a Christian explanation. As early as the latter part of the ninth century, Arethas had written an answer to those who had accused him of obscurity.⁷⁰ Like Metochites, he defends himself by saying that his writing appears obscure not because he has abandoned the rhetorical rules, but because his contemporaries do not understand him. Obscurity has the virtue of keeping out the crowd. The source for such a sentiment is probably to be found in the admonition by Photius (his teacher):

I answer in a few words your question, as to just why it is that prophecy is overshadowed by the devices of obscurity. Prophecy is not history. The virtue of history is assuredly to speak clearly and not to contrive. It teaches events done in our midst, which we all alike, the prominent and the ordinary, experienced at the time and may learn about now. For prophecy, on the other hand, the function of which is to reveal the hidden to those who are worthy, but to keep it from the uninitiated, that is most fitting which is obscure and enigmatic and screened from view. So I think your difficulty is solved: to wit, if we did not need to learn, we should not be obliged to speak at all; but if we are to learn, then prophecy should not be unclear and practically the same as not speaking at all. My remarks have now established that it is both proper to learn and necessary not to speak wantonly and commonly. Things should rather be said in clarity to the initiated but kept inaccessible and unapproachable to the profane.⁷¹

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 57.

⁷⁰ *Πρὸς τοὺς εἰς ἀσάφειαν ἡμᾶς ἐπισκώψαντας, ἐν ᾧ καὶ τίς ἡ ἰδέα οὗ μέτιμεν λόγου*, ed. L. Westerink, *Arethae scripta minora* (Leipzig 1968) 186-191. See Ševčenko (n. 68 above) 169 n. 2.

⁷¹ PG, 101.948B, C: *πυθομένῳ δέ σοι τί δήποτε ἡ προφητεία τοῖς τῆς ἀσαφείας τρόποις συνεσκιάσται, διὰ βραχέων ἀμείβομαι. Διότι οὐκ ἔστιν ἱστορία ἡ προφητεία. ἱστορίας μὲν γάρ, εἴπερ τι ἄλλο, ἀρετὴ σαφῶς τε εἰπεῖν καὶ μηδὲν περινενοημένον ἐξεργάσασθαι. Τὰ γὰρ ἐν τῷ μέσῳ γεγενημένα διδάσκει, καὶ ἅ πάντες ὁμοίως καὶ σπουδαῖοι καὶ φαῦλοι κατ' ἐκείνο καιροῦ ἠπίσταντο, καὶ νῦν εἰδέναι οὐκ ἀπείργονται. προφητεία δέ, ἥς ἔργον τοῖς ἀξίοις ἀποκαλύπτειν τὰ ἄδηλα, τοῖς δὲ βεβήλοις ἄβαρα ποιεῖν, τὸ συνεσκιασμένον*

Photius's remarks proceed from a reading of the famous text of Saint Paul on the prophecy of tongues (1 Corinthians 13.4-14.40). They are prompted more by a religious than a literary feeling. The sentiment, however, could and did give him and his student biblical authority for cultivating deliberate obscurity in the name of both Christianity and of the classical tradition as seen through the medium of Hermogenes. Psellus was later to say that a man who does not have the proper combination of rhetoric, philosophy, and political action is as tinkling cymbal.⁷² The phrase comes from precisely the same scriptural context. It was to serve Byzantium well. The Pauline text that inspired the translation of the liturgy into foreign tongues and the conversion of the heathen and revealed Byzantium in her most glorious and successful role might also sustain the most serious shortcomings of her literature.⁷³

Such were the rhetorical patterns that Byzantium inherited from her Greco-Roman past and the uses to which they were put. The history of accommodation to rhetoric is the history of Byzantine culture itself. Byzantium contended throughout her history with the challenge implicit in her very birththright. There are moments when the two claimants to her soul, Christianity and classical culture, stand apart, but in the very dualism of her nature there lay hope for a union and harmony such as the ninth century proffered. The grand tragedy of Byzantium lies in the fact that the expanded consciousness of both the Christian and the classical traditions in the ninth century facilitated the selection of one *or* the other on the part of succeeding generations.

Rhetoric was one of the few elements of Byzantine life to survive the wreckage of 1453. Many of the rhetorical ideals of Hermogenes are adapted by the Italian Renaissance, and in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries exert an even greater influence on English letters. Aphthonius, through even more numerous editions and translations, passed into the educational habits of Europe. Indeed, the techniques of composition practiced in our schools ultimately owe much to the tradition that he represents, while among the more conservative quarters of modern seminary education, the retention of

καὶ αἰνιγματῶδες καὶ τὸ διὰ παραπετασμάτων, πρὸς πωδέστατον. Ἐξ ὧν οἶμαι λελῦσθαι σοι τὸ ἄπορον, ὥς, εἰ μὴ ἔδει μαθεῖν, οὐδ' ὅλως ἔχρην εἰπεῖν, εἰ δ' ἐκρίθη μαθεῖν, οὐκ ἀσφαλῶς ἔχειν τὴν προφητείαν, καὶ ἐν ἴσῳ σχεδὸν τοῦ μηδὲ εἰρῆσθαι. διητήθη γὰρ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων, ὅτι καὶ μαθεῖν προσήκον ἦν καὶ ἀναγκαῖον μὴ βεβήλως καὶ κοινῶς εἰπεῖν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μὲν μύσταις εἰρῆσθαι σαφῆ, ἅδυντα δὲ τοῖς ἀμνήτοις διατηρηθῆναι καὶ οὐκ ἐφικτά.

⁷² *Bibliotheca graeca* 5.148.

⁷³ It would be a useful and rewarding task to trace the history of this difficult and at some points obscure text in Byzantine thought. The passage is crucial to the understanding of some of the most basic manifestations of Byzantine culture.

⁷⁴ Hermogenes' contribution to English literature forms the subject of a book by Professor A. M. Endicott of the University of Toronto, to appear shortly under the auspices of the Princeton University Press.

rhetorical forms such as the *θέσις*, one of the most common of the medieval progymnasmata, gives proof of the continuing vitality of ancient forms.⁷⁵

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⁷⁵ See Brzoska s.v. "Aphthonios" in Pauly-Wissowa. *Real-Encyclopädie*, for relevant bibliography. I do not wish to depreciate other more important elements, such as Aristotle and Cicero, but only to call attention to a neglected aspect of the rhetorical tradition. The *editio princeps* of both Aphthonius and Hermogenes (except for his *Progymnasmata*, not printed until 1790, ed. Heeren, Göttingen) is volume 1 of the Aldine *Rhetorum graecorum collectio* (Venice 1508). The first Latin translation of Aphthonius appeared as early as 1513 (Aldine, ed. J. Catanaeus). After that his editions are very frequent and widespread throughout Europe. Some were to become very popular and influential, as for example, the Latin version by R. Agricola (Paris 1549). In addition to the lists provided in the introductions in Rabe's editions, consult J. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca graeca* 6 (Hamburg 1797) 69ff., 95ff.; also Brzoska, *loc. cit.* For the history of rhetoric among Greek speakers after 1453, particularly as regards homiletics, two recent works are indispensable: K. Kourkoulas, *Ἡ Θεωρία τοῦ κηρύγματος κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τῆς Τουρκοκρατίας* (Athens 1957), and P. Trempeles, *Ὀμιλητικὴ ἢ Ἱστορία καὶ θεωρία τοῦ κηρύγματος* (Athens 1950). I wish to thank Mr. Laourdas for calling my attention to these two works.